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of society. With a reduction of 7000 cases in 1919 as compared with the 1900-1910 period, there has been a corresponding reduction in the number of carriers, through the efficient work of the division of preventable disease.

Excellent as these records are, great as have been the strides forward in making water supplies safe, Mr. Whittaker's investigations show that there are many supplies which are unsafe. The work has reduced the hazards, but it has to be continuous and energetic to keep the hazards reduced. To bring about still more improvement means greater expenditures, for it is usually the easier problems to solve which are finished first, and as the field is covered the unit cost of accomplishing what is left generally rises. When the chart of what has been done is studied, when one reflects what suffering to the sick and anguish to their families have been saved for this small expenditure of \$7000 annually, it is difficult to understand why all the money necessary to make the work more thorough and comprehensive cannot be found by the legislature of a state as wealthy as Minnesota.

JOHN M. GOODELL.

WILL CITIES EVER LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHER CITIES
HOW TO PROTECT THEIR PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES?

Again an Illinois city has had the lesson brought home of the danger of permitting cross connections between the city water supplies and an industrial water supply of inferior quality. An outbreak including several hundred cases of diarrhea, about 130 cases of typhoid and fifteen or more deaths has been the price paid for this lesson recently at Bloomington.

Owing to the shortage of Bloomington city water (resulting mainly from having to supply the city of Normal with water while it was having trouble with its own supply) the Chicago & Alton railroad shops at Bloomington were requested to use as little city water as possible, which resulted in pumping a mixture of creek water and city sewage into its industrial supply. The mains carrying this filthy water were connected with the drinking water main carrying pure city water in one of the shops and the two supplies were separated by a single gate valve. A normal pressure of 60 pounds was maintained on the city supply and a pressure of from 120 to 180 pounds was maintained on the railroad supply, thus tending to cause the polluted water to be forced into the city pipes. After

work hours, the difference of pressure was even greater, for the city supply was shut off by means of the valve at the meter, and leaky fixtures permitted the pressure to drop to zero.

Following the outbreak, the connection between the two systems was at once suspected of having caused the trouble. The connection was, therefore, broken and the valve upon examination was found to be leaking badly. There is no question as to what caused the outbreak or where the infection entered, and now Bloomington, like many other cities, has learned a simple A. B. C. lesson but at frightful cost.

How long will it be until all communities as well as all industrial managements will realize the danger involved in permitting connections between safe and unsafe supplies of water? How long will it be until they realize that mechanical devices and the human element involved wherever a connection exists, can not be depended upon to properly safeguard the lives of those drinking the water? Let every waterworks official make it his business to see that his city removes at once any connection existing between the public supply and any other supply less pure! Do not wait until the horse is stolen before locking the stable door!

PAUL HANSEN.

RURAL WATER SUPPLIES

The serious effect of bad water supplies on the farms and in small villages upon the health of our cities has long been recognized, but only when a milk epidemic calls loudly to the public for more strict supervision of rural sanitation is any real action taken. We are too busy with our own affairs to think of farm wells. When some acquaintance dies from typhoid contracted during a vacation in the country, we usually decide to protest against the crimes committed against sanitation in the rural districts, and then we forget all about it. But there is one organization which has been steadily working for many years to make rural living conditions more hygienic. This is the United States Public Health Service, which is endeavoring, by cooperation with state and local authorities, to establish really efficient county health bureaus.

The work is done under one of those fifty-fifty systems of sharing expense which are now so often adopted by Congress in its state-aid legislation. In 1918 and again in 1919 Congress appropriated \$150,000 for this work. In the latter year the Public Health Service asked for \$500,000 for the work in 1920, but Congress reduced this